

Message Text

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ACTION H-03

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AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 1758

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OREP (CODEL DIGGS, WHALEN, AND SOLARZ)
SUBJECT: CODEL DIGGS, WHALEN, AND SOLARZ MEETING WITH PRESIDENT
KOUNTCHE

1. SUMMARY. MEETING WITH CODEL DIGGS, WHALEN, AND SOLARZ
APRIL 15, PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE EXTENDED APPRECIATION FOR U.S.
ASSISTANCE. PRESIDENT OUTLINED THREE AREAS OF BASIC EMPHASIS
FOR LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS: (1) WATER RESOURCES,
(2) LIVESTOCK, AND (3) TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE. PRESIDENT
SAID NIGER PLAYS INDEPENDENT ROLE IN AFRICA. OTHER STATES HAVING
RECEIVED SUPPORT IN LIBERATION STRUGGLES OR OTHERWISE OPENING
THEMSELVES TO QUOTE EAST UNQUOTE PROVIDE GATEWAYS FOR OUTSIDE
INFLUENCE ON CONTINENT. ZAIRE SITUATION, PRESIDENT CONTINUED,
RAISES THREAT FOR ALL OF AFRICA. U.S. SHOULD TAKE ACCOUNT OF
SOVIET STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES IN SOUTHERN AFRICA AND
REALIZE THAT PROBLEMS THERE CANNOT BE SOLVED WITHOUT
SUPER-POWER CONCURRENCE. PRESIDENT CONCLUDED WITH APPEAL
TO MEMBERS OF CONGRESS TO REMAIN MINDFUL OF CONNECTION
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BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND SECURITY PROBLEMS AND TO HELP WITH
AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT SO CONTINENT CAN BE SPARED FROM AN
IMPENDING DISASTER (UN VERITABLE DRAME). END SUMMARY.

2. CHARIMAN DIGGS: WE APPRECIATE YOUR HOSPITALITY AND
THE EDUCATION WE HAVE RECEIVED IN OUR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS
HERE FROM YOUR MINISTERS AND THE PEOPLE OF NIGER. THE

PARADE THIS MORNING WAS A DRAMATIC DISPLAY OF NATIONAL UNITY. WE ARE HERE AS PART OF A TOUR OF SAHEL COUNTRIES, ASSESSING THE SAHEL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM. WE KNOW YOUR GOVERNMENT IS ACTIVE IN NEGOTIATION OF PEACE SETTLEMENTS IN AFRICA AND IN NON-ALIGNED. WE WOULD WELCOME YOUR VIEWS ON AFRICA'S PROBLEMS, ESPECIALLY ZAIRE WHERE THERE IS A MILITARY GOVERNMENT WITH PROBLEMS -- INTERNAL OR EXTERNAL DEPENDING ON HOW YOU LOOK AT IT -- WITH WHICH IT CANNOT CONTEND. THE U.S. IS ALREADY TO SOME EXTENT INVOLVED. WE WOULD WELCOME YOUR COUNSEL ABOUT WHAT U.S. ROLE SHOULD BE.

PRESIDENT KOUNTCHE. NIGER WARMLY APPRECIATED U.S. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE DURING AND AFTER THE DROUGHT. ON LONGER-TERM DEVELOPMENT THREE AREAS ARE OF PRIMARY CONCERN TO US. FIRST THE WHOLE AREA OF WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT -- DAMS, WELLS AND IRRIGATION. SECOND THE RECONSTITUTION OF LIVESTOCK. WE WANT TO DO THIS USING AMERICAN TECHNIQUES AND KNOW-HOW. FINALLY, WE ARE A LAND-LOCKED COUNTRY; FINDING ROUTES TO THE SEA IS MOST IMPORTANT. IN SUMMARY WHAT THE U.S. HAS DONE SO FAR IS JUST RIGHT. BEARING IN MIND THESE THREE PRIORITY AREAS, WE HOPE YOU WILL CONTINUE HELPING THE COUNTRIES OF THE SAHEL TO HELP THEMSELVES.

3. KOUNTCHE: I CANNOT PROMISE THE MEMBERS OF CONGRESS THAT THERE WON'T BE CRITICISM OF THE U.S. FROM AFRICANS ALONG THE WAY. BUT YOU SHOULD NOT LOSE HEART OR BE DETERRED. IN THE END, AFRICA WILL ALWAYS RECOGNIZE ITS FRIENDS. BASICALLY THERE ARE ONLY TWO POWERS THAT COUNT IN AFRICA -- THE U.S. AND THE QUOTE EAST UNQUOTE. MANY AFRICAN COUNTRIES, BECAUSE CONFIDENTIAL

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OF PREVIOUS LIBERATION STRUGGLES, ARE INDEBTED TO THE EASTERN CAMP OR UNDER ITS INFLUENCE -- ALGERIA, MOZAMBIQUE, GUINEA BISSAU. WE AND OUR FRIENDS IN THIS PART OF AFRICA ARE NOT. WE HOPE THE U. . WILL KEEP THE STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE OF AFRICA IN VIEW. SOME OF THE ALIENT ELEMENTS ARE THE RED SEA, THE CAPE ROUTE, AND OIL FLOWS FROM THE MIDDLE EAST. ZAIRE IS ONLY PARTIALLY AN INTERNAL SITUATION. IT TOO SHOULD BE SEEN AS A STRATEGIC PROBLEM. LONG TERM WHAT HAPPENS IN ZAIRE AND IN ALL OF SOUTHERN AFRICA WILL BE DETERMINED BY THE POLICIES AND ACTIVITIES OF THE U.S. AND THE USSR.

4. KOUNTCHE: LET ME ALSO SAY NIGER CONGRATULATES ITSELF ON THE PEACE CORPS. YOUR VOLUNTEERS KNOW OUR PROBLEMS DIRECTLY AT THE WORKING LEVEL. WE DEEPLY APPRECIATE THE KIND OF HELP WHICH IS FAR MORE USEFUL TO AFRICA THAN GIVING ARMS. ARMS DO NOT HELP ANYONE RAISE HIS STANDARD OF LIFE. THOSE WHO ARE ARMING AFRICA ARE HURTING AFRICA AND DIVERTING EFFORT BETTER SPENT ON DEVELOPMENT. ALL WE WANT IS TO BE LEFT ALONE AND TO HAVE YOUR HELP IN

DEVELOPING OURSELVES WHILE CONSERVING OUR OWN TRADITIONS.
THUS MY MESSAGE TO YOU, WHO REPRESENT THE PEOPLE OF THE
U.S., IS TO ASSIST US IN THIS EFFORT. IT IS IMPORTANT
THAT YOU DO SO BECAUSE OTHERWISE AFRICA IS GOING TO COME
APART. THERE IS GOING TO BE UNPRECEDENTED UPHEAVAL.

DIGGS: YOUR MESSAGE IS LOUD AND CLEAR. WE FIND YOUR
APPEAL REASONABLE AND SENSIBLE. MY COLLEAGUES AND I SHARE
YOUR VIEW. I CAN TELL YOU THAT PRESIDENT CARTER IS SYMPA-
THETIC TO YOUR CONCERNS AND IS WORKING HARD ON PROGRAMS
WHEREBY WE CAN SHARE SOME OF THE BENEFITS OF OUR SOCIETY
WITH OTHERS, BASED ON A CLEAR RECOGNITION OF THE INTER-
DEPENDENCE BETWEEN THE U.S. AND AFRICA.

JAMES

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